

Camas Hotel renovations near end

□ New owners hope to attract restaurant operator next door

By Dawn Feldhaus

Post-Record staff

There has been a lot of contractor activity inside and outside the Camas Hotel during the past several months, and the building's owners are looking forward to having a grand opening this summer.

Thomas and Karen Hall, formerly of Ojai, Calif., purchased the hotel and building at 405 N.E. Fourth Ave., in September 2008. Since then, they have embarked on a renovation project estimated to cost several hundred thousand dollars.

Phase one has included work done on the second floor, exterior and lobby. A new sign was added last week, and awnings and wrought iron faux balconies are expected to be installed this month.

During the renovations, part of the hotel has continued to house a variety of individuals.

"The third floor is very much in use as extended stay and is often full," Karen Hall said. "People love the location, because downtown Camas is safe and charming. Most of our current guests are either in transition — moving house, looking for work in this area, going through divorce or visiting family."

Recent guests have included a bank manager, a crewmember working on Harrison Ford's new movie and a young couple visiting from Australia, Hall said.

"Europeans and foreigners are much more comfortable with the old-fashioned shared bathrooms that are available on the third floor," she added. "Everyone enjoys the low rates and being close to shops, restaurants, spas and movies downtown."

Hall said there has already been interest expressed in the renovated portion of the hotel.

"Some newlyweds have booked the honeymoon suite with Jacuzzi tub in July, and an older couple on a tour of the Columbia Gorge in June," she said. "Tourism is definitely an area that can bring more money to this area if we continue to make our community more visitor friendly."

The third floor will be renovated in 2010.

Meanwhile, the Halls are hoping to attract a restaurant operator to open in the former Andes Treasures location next to the hotel. For more information, call the Camas Hotel at 834-5722.



DAWN FELDHAUS/POST-RECORD

Shannon Peterson, with Vancouver Sign Co., installs a new sign at Camas Hotel. The hotel, constructed in the early 1900s, in downtown Camas, has received several hundred thousand dollars in renovations. Awnings and wrought iron faux balconies will be installed this month. The hotel's owners hope to open this summer.